(c) whether steps are being taken to export wheat to other countries to make proper use of excess wheat; and

(d) steps being taken to pay remunerative prices of wheat to farmers to ensure that they are not put to hardship?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) The production of wheat is likely to be 70.63 million tonnes during 1998-99.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State agencies have adequate storage capacities for storage of wheat. All the concerned State Governments have been asked to make available storage capacity for wheat on priority basis. The Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) has also been directed to give overriding priority for storage of foodgrains.

(c) The Government constantly reviews the stock -position of foodgrains in the Centra! Pool *vis-a-vis* the prescribed buffer norms, production of foodgrains, trend of procurement, requirement for PDS/other welfare schemes, open market prices, etc, and decision to import/export of foodgrains is taken depending on the overall situation. However, export can be allowed of only such quantities as are not likely to endanger the PDS in the country or unduly push up prices internally, particularly in respect of staple foodgrains like wheat and rice.

(d) Adequate number of purchase centres are opened before the commencement of the marketing season to procure all the wheat offered for sale by farmers under price support. Control Rooms are set up to monitor the procurement operations and any report of distress sale is promptly referred to the FCI and concerned State Governments for immediate remedial action.

Fruits Production in Andhra Pradesh

2648. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Andhra Pradesh is the largest fruit producing State in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the annual production of fruits category-wise in terms of quantity and value;

(c) whether it is proposed to assist the State Government to undertake a massive fruit export programme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. the fruit-wise annual production of fruits during 1997-98 is as follows:

SI. No.	Name of Fruit	Production (in tonne)
1.	Banana	11318758
2.	Citrus	1017435
3.	Grapes	35300
4.	Guava	125412
5.	Mango	3314340
6.	Papaya	156900
7.	Sapota	56400
8.	Others	61450
	TOTAL :	5899112

The value of produce is not being maintained.

(c) and (d) The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under the Ministry of Commerce is providing assistance to the Government of Andhra Pradesh in the following ways to promote export of fruits;

Facility for cargo handling and cold storage for the export of various produce including fruits, vegetables and flowers is being set up at Hyderabad International Airport at a cost of Rs. 1.5 crores.

The exporters are extended financial assistance to set up modern packhouses in Andhra Pradesh for post harvest handling and export packaging of grapes and mangoes.

Action has been initiated to develop protocol for shipment of Banganapalli mangos through Controlled Atmosphere containers to United Kingdom and other distant markets.

An Integrated Training Programme has been launched for training growers and exporters for pre-harvest, harvesting and post harvest management of mangoes and grapes to improve the quality of export produce.

Assistance has been provided for twelve units in Chittoor district for upgrading their facilities for quality assurance and obtaining certificate for introduction of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) system in processed Food in respect of processing of mango pulp.

Abolition of MMPO licences for milk production

2649. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering a proposal to do away with licences under MMPO Act for milk production;

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be implemented;

(c) whether delicencing will influence adulteration of milk and milk products; and

(d) if so, what protective measures are being considered by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) There is no proposal under the consideration of the Government to abolish Milk and Milk Product Order, 1992.

(b) to (d) In view of (a) above, questions do not arise.

Crop Insurance Scheme

2650. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is coming with any specific scheme for Crop Insurance to the farmers;

(b) if so, when it is likely to be implemented;

(c) what are the main highlights of this scheme; and

(d) how the farmers will be benefited through this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (d) The Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (CCIS) covering loanee farmers growing wheat, paddy, millets (including maize), oilseeds, pulses crops and availing crop loans from rural financial institutions is already in operation since Kharif 1985 season onwards.

A proposal to introduce a Modified Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (MCCIS) so as to make it more attractive to the farmers to enlarge the scope of its coverage in terms of farmers, crops etc. and at the same time to make it commercially viable is under consideration of the Government of India. The proposed scheme is likely to be introduced from Rabi 1999-2000 onward.